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ABSTRACT

Intended for participants in the volunteer grandparents program, this manual briefly defines Head Start program purposes, goals, and recipients and describes training guidelines for volunteer grandparents and staff training coordinators. Training for the volunteer grandparent project is outlined in terms of volunteer service, personal satisfaction, communication with children, problem solving, arts and crafts, field trips, reading with children, cooking activities, and sharing experiences. Also included is a guide for the training coordinator, which identifies discussion groups, classroom observation, curriculum workshops, group supervision, and resource guides as approaches for training senior citizens. Three sequential learning experiences, detailing learner objectives and activities, are included for the following areas: cooking, children's literature, and pretend play. (BJD)

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Volunteer Grandparents in HEAD START

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VOLUNTEER GRANDPARENTS

IN HEAD START

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This is a publication developed by the Institute for Child and Family Studies at Texas Tech University. The mission of the Institute is to assist those who work for and with young children and their families through research, development, and training activities so that they may be more effective teachers, administrators, aides, parents, and supportive personnel.

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FOREWORD

Our senior citizens have much to offer children and our society in general. Their past experiences, as well as their desire to be productive citizens, are good reasons why this special population can be a welcome and supportive resource to Head Start programs. The utilization of senior citizens as volunteers in Head Start is not a novel idea as this has been going on since the inception of the program. What is new, however, is the idea of developing training materials specific to the needs of this particular group to assist them with their volunteer efforts in Head Start. This publication was developed with that particular purpose in mind. The areas covered in this publication address to our senior citizen volunteers what Head Start is, what the Volunteer Grandparent Project is all about, and a sampling of activities that can be undertaken in the Head Start classroom. The authors hope that this short, but

concise orientation will assist directors, component heads, center directors, and teachers in introducing volunteers to Head Start.

The development of this manual is the result of a need expressed by Fred Wittenburg, Executive Director, Alice Jane Allen, Head Start Director, and Cornelia Boykin, Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) Director from the Hill Country Community Action Association to staff from the Institute for Child and Family Studies at Texas Tech University. The Hill Country CAA has a history of involving the elderly in its various programs and is constantly trying to improve its training activities. Jeri Lyn Rieken, RSVP Coordinator with the College of Home Economics at Texas Tech University, also provided assistance with some of the ideas and pictures used in the publication. Others who assisted with this project were Maily Pirtle, Coordinator; James Mitchell, Assistant Director; and Trudi Post, secretary, all with the Institute for Child and Family Studies

at Texas Tech University. The pictures used in this publication were provided by Hill Country CAA and ACTION, the National Volunteer Agency, Joan Kelley, staff writer.



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This publication is dedicated to the participants of the Retired Senior Volunteer Program operated by Hill Country Community Action Agency located in San Saba, Texas. The involvement of these senior citizens in Head Start has enriched the lives of the children and their families immensely.

TO THE SENIOR VOLUNTEER

The first half of this booklet is written to acquaint you with the program and help you clarify your goals in becoming a part of the Head Start Volunteer Grandparents.



OVERVIEW OF HEAD START PROGRAMS



PROJECT HEAD START MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

WHAT IS HEAD START?

The Head Start Center is both a concept and a community facility. The core of the center is one or more preschool classrooms and outdoor play areas that serve about 15 children each. Classrooms are staffed by one teacher and two teacher aides, one of which is a volunteer.

Each center provides a comprehensive program of parent involvement, nutritional, medical, dental, psychological, and social services. Furthermore, these services are directed not only at the child, but at the child as part of the family and the community.

HOW IS THIS ACCOMPLISHED?

The idea of a comprehensive developmental program was unknown before the Head Start federal program began in 1965. The goal of Head Start is to enhance children's everyday effectiveness in dealing with their present world of home, school, and neighborhood and their total development within the context of the family and community.



The following are broad goals of Head Start:

- Improving the child's health and physical abilities.
- Helping the child's emotional and social development by encouraging self-confidence, self-expression, self-discipline and curiosity.
- Improving and expanding the child's ability to think, reason and speak clearly.
- Helping children to get wider and more varied experiences which will broaden their horizons, increase their ease of conversation, and improve their understanding of the world in which they live.
- Giving the child frequent chances to succeed.
- Developing a climate of confidence for the child which will help him want to learn.
- Increasing the child's ability to get along with others in the family and, at the same time, helping the family to understand the child -- thus strengthening family ties.
- Helping both the child and his family to a greater self-confidence.

WHO IS HEAD START THEN?

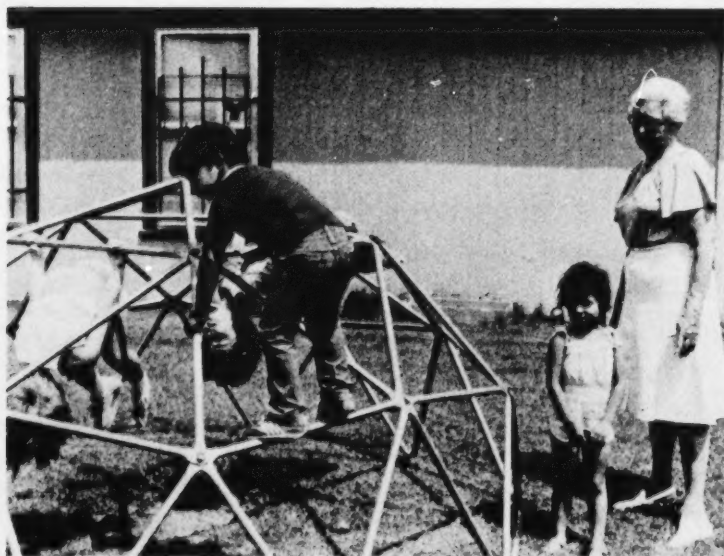
Head Start serves low income families by providing a comprehensive developmental program. It represents the drawing together of all those resources -- family, community, and professional -- which can contribute to the child's total development. Head Start draws on the professional skills of people in nutrition, health, education, social work, psychology, and recreation and recognizes that volunteer professionals can make some important contributions.

The Head Start concept emphasizes that the family is fundamental to the child's development. Head Start children may come from a wide variety of different kinds of families -- working parent, single parent, grandparent, adoptive, and foster families. The family who is living with the child as well as the extended family network, the relatives, and close family friends may all contribute to children's understanding of who they are and their belonging.

WHEN AND WHERE DOES THIS HAPPEN?

Although the Head Start center in your community may be open half-days or full-days, four or five days a week, the Head Start program enhancing the development of the "whole child" may go on even when the Child Development Center is closed, through the family's practice of good nutrition and healthy habits,

through home visits by staff or volunteers, or by parents helping their own children to learn and to grow.



WHY HEAD START ANYWAY?

Head Start really works. A number of studies have shown that many Head Start children demonstrate superior intellectual ability well into the elementary school grades when compared to non-Head Start children. While some evaluators have focused on the need to

improve the IQ scores of children, parents and staff have been more concerned with improving the overall well-being of children in the program.

Raising IQ scores has never been the major objective of Head Start. From the beginning, local programs have had a great deal of flexibility in planning educational curricula that meet the needs of their own children and communities -- center-based, home-based, parent-child centers.

Through an emphasis on coordinating local services for children and their families, such as health, social, and educational services, the impact of the Head Start programs on their communities should be even more significant in years to come.



VOLUNTEERS IN HEAD START PROGRAMS



HEAD START VOLUNTEERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

VOLUNTEERS ARE VERY IMPORTANT

From the beginning, Head Start has relied very much on volunteers to increase the adult resources and to provide more individual attention for the children. Head Start has always recognized the full, open cooperation among all members of the Head Start team. By working together, by sharing concerns about individual children as well as about the program as a whole, everyone benefits.

The one qualification most needed for a volunteer is a dedication to the welfare of children and a willingness to commit time and energy in their behalf. Those who work directly with children enjoy the young, take pleasure in working with them and listening to them, and are willing to learn more about the fostering of the processes of growth and development.

Some volunteers may enter directly into the educational program. Those who know about machines, trucks, animals or gardening might come in when needed. Some volunteers lend unusual talents: singers can teach children songs, musicians can play instruments, artists can share an appreciation for color. These specialized volunteers can assume responsibility for one part of the regular program!

THE GENERATION GAP MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

SENIOR VOLUNTEERS ARE UNIQUE

The best thing about getting older may be that you know a lot about a lot of things! Grandparents can share what they spent a lifetime learning with the younger generations.





The special kind of wisdom, experience, and understanding of a senior volunteer can make a big difference in the kind of image of older people a young child grows up with.

The Head Start Volunteer Grandparent project provides great benefits for two different groups of people: senior citizens who want to participate in the life of their community and Head Start children who need love, care and attention. A lot of Volunteer Grandparents are able to spend more time with

individual children than the staff finds possible. The Volunteer Grandparent may also develop a strong, personal relationship with an individual child, for whom a specially designed program was developed with the senior volunteer's input.

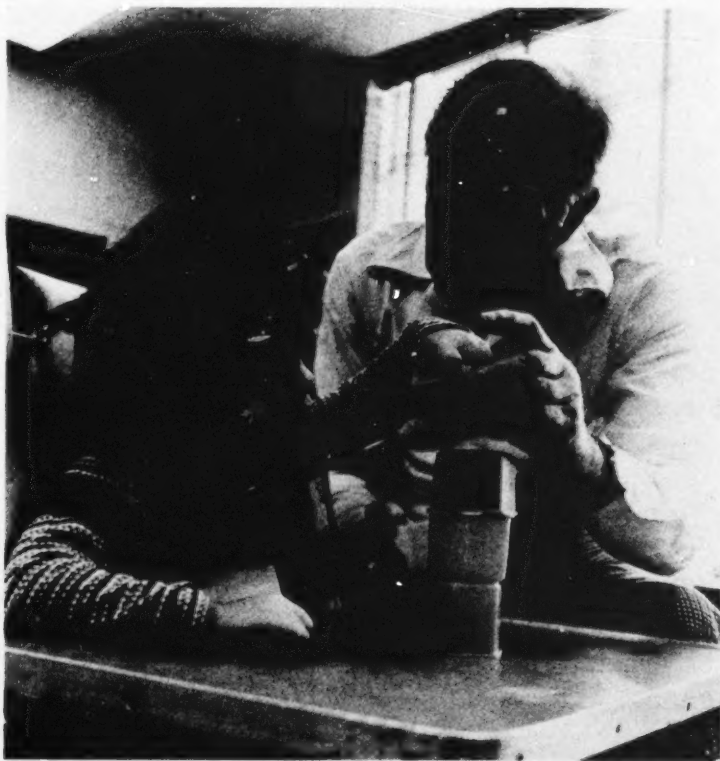
Since today's children are sometimes without contact with their own grandparents or other older people, a meaningful bond with the Volunteer Grandparent often develops for both the child and his or her parents -- who themselves may be missing their own parents due to death or separation.

Inter-generational programs such as the Volunteer Grandparent project will offer to the older person:

- An opportunity to share accumulated wisdom, skill, knowledge and experience.
- An opportunity to be needed, useful, and productive.
- Respect, recognition, and understanding.
- Chances to empathize with the struggles of youth.
- Vitalized curiosity and growth.
- Interaction with the larger community.
- Companionship and friendship.

Head Start children will gain from
Volunteer Grandparents:

- Learning of skills and increased knowledge.
- Learning positive aspects of the aging process.
- A better historical and cultural awareness.
- Companionship and friendship.
- An enhanced self-image.



THE VOLUNTEER GRANDPARENT PROJECT



VOLUNTEER GRANDPARENTING IS FUN!

WHAT CAN YOU DO FOR KIDS?

As a volunteer Grandparent you will first talk with the Director, the Coordinator or the child's teacher to work out a plan for your participation that you would enjoy and that would take into account your strengths and skills. There are at least three levels of Volunteer Grandparent involvement in Head Start:

(1) As a Volunteer Grandparent you may serve as a classroom volunteer -- acting as a play group leader for a small number of children, providing individualized learning experiences to one youngster, or perhaps reading or telling stories to a large group.

(2) Your involvement may also take the form of materials development and toy-making for individual children. Many senior volunteers are already making rag dolls or block toys for the classrooms. The Volunteer Grandparent project would expand that opportunity by training you to use the learning materials in a creative way with the children you designed them for!

(3) Becoming a Volunteer Grandparent may also mean working in the child's home or bringing a child to yours.

WHAT VOLUNTEERING CAN DO FOR YOU!

Volunteers make a commitment to Head Start when they offer their services and will be made to feel an integral part of the program. You will be included in regular meetings of the paid staff whenever possible. Ask your Director when such meetings are planned and put them on your calendar.

Training will be provided to Volunteer Grandparents (see Part II of this booklet!) initially upon joining the project -- called Pre-Service Training -- and regularly throughout your volunteer experience -- called In-Service Training. It is your responsibility to be acquainted with the underlying philosophy of Head Start and the goals of the local program in which you are working. It is the Head Start program's responsibility to explain your duties, train you, and tell you who to report to, as well as basic regulations pertaining to yourself and the children.

If your Head Start Volunteer Grandparent involvement is satisfying to you, ask your Head Start Director about the federally-funded Foster Grandparent Program which provides its half-time volunteers with an initial 40 hours of training, monthly in-service, a stipend, meals, accident insurance, and an annual physical examination.



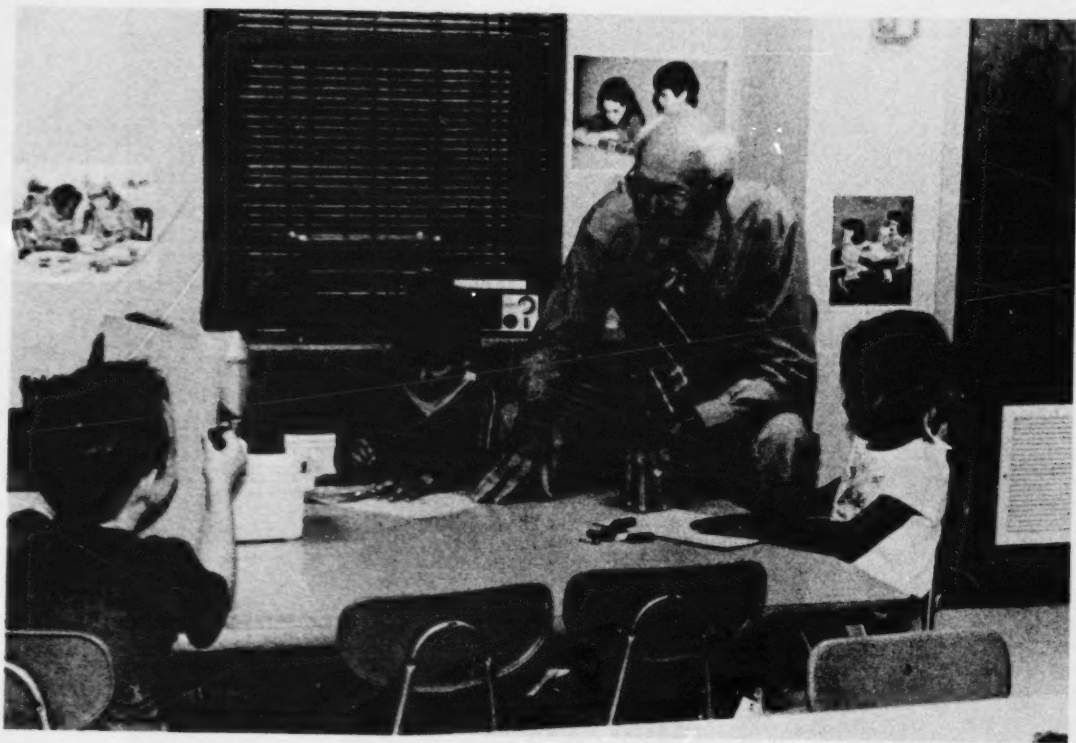
HOW DO I WORK WITH AN INDIVIDUAL CHILD?

TALKING IS IMPORTANT!

Language is probably the most important way the child learns. In talking to others, the child encounters alternate perspectives on the world. Language and thought develop together.

Normal instruction in grammar is not appropriate at the preschool level; however, the awareness of second language, dialects within one language, or new vocabularies within the context of the immediate situation is of interest. Things the Volunteer Grandparent can do:

- Talk to the child during meals and quiet times about topics of interest.
- Talk about what you are doing while cooking, or playing.
- Make up pretend situations to act out that relate to the children's own experience or to stories they've read.
- Ask questions about the story when you read aloud to children.
- Sing your favorite songs from your childhood and take pleasure in creating new lyrics with the children.
- Share expressions that are a part of the past and talk about what they mean.

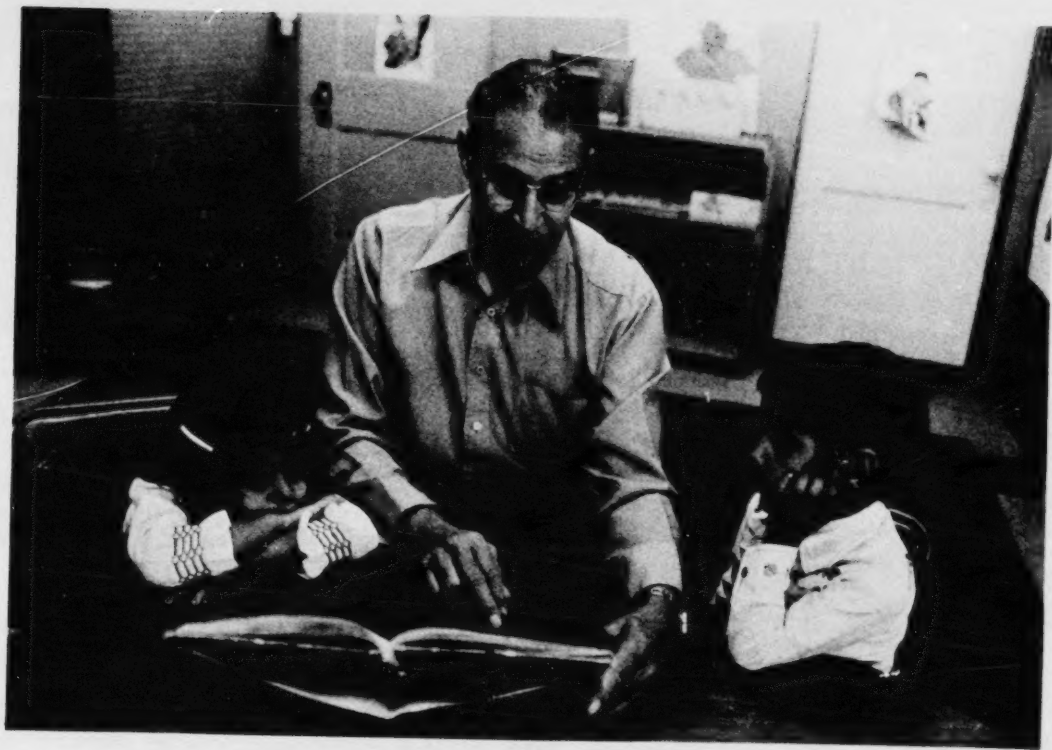


READ A BOOK ALOUD

Reading experiences give the child first-hand encounters with the beauty and rhythm of words, with imagination, and the widening of his or her own experiences.

Reading to children also helps them to recognize that writing carries an important message.

- Read stories that relate to your personal experiences, then tell children stories about what you have done in your life that is related to the book's topic.
- Read a story without showing the pictures and have the children imagine their own illustrations and describe them.
- Record a story of what happened that day in a blank book made of cut and stapled pages; read it to the children.



HELP CHILDREN SOLVE PROBLEMS

The understanding of math concepts can be developed through observation, description, sorting, weighting, and measuring.

Stimulate children to organize what they see in terms of relationship.

- Talk about how things were organized when you were young: in groceries, in homes.
- Allow children to pour their own drinks, estimating the amount needed to fill the glass.
- Cook with children and allow them to measure the ingredients.
- Talk about the number and ages of children in your family; in theirs.



HOW DO I USE WHAT I'VE MADE FOR CHILDREN?

PRETEND PLAY WITH BABY!

If you have enough time and materials, making a fabric doll for each child in the class gives everyone a baby to learn to care for, be parent to, be gentle with.

- Use old fabric scraps if you have them; sometimes you will recall what the piece came from and the children will love to know!
- Talk about stories of raising your own children or of how they grew up.
- Teach children lullabies that you knew as a child or that you sang to your children when they were very young.
- Teach the children how to diaper a baby with cloth diapers and pins.
- Bring in old baby clothes if you have any from years ago.

HANDCRAFT A WHEEL TOY

Almost all toys today are made of plastic and wooden ones are rare and very costly. Bring in some crafted wheel toys, wooden flutes, home-made doll beds, etc.

- Talk about toys you used to have as a child.
- Let children work with wood, hammers and nails and make their own toy object.
- Take a child to a crafts fair and look at handcrafted items; talk about them.





WHAT DO I DO WHEN WE ARE AT HOME?

WE ALL HAVE TO EAT!

Food experiences are among the most social and sharing experiences in life. When you take someone into your home, the most natural times are eating together.

- Go shopping with the child and pick out groceries together.
- Talk about how food selection and prices have changed over the years.
- Talk about favorite recipes from your childhood and cook one together.

EVERYONE LOVES OLD PHOTOS

Children will be fascinated by snapshots or photographs of you and your family and friends. By sharing old albums, your memory will be jarred by experiences you may have forgotten. This is your oral history -- pass it on!

- Point out how clothing styles have changed.
- Get out some old clothes and let the child dress up and pretend to be you or someone in the pictures.

- Look at other changes -- cars, hairstyles, etc. Talk about your first car -- what was it?
- Talk about where you lived as a child? Was it near here?



LET'S ALL GO TO THE BALL GAME!

Community activities such as neighborhood sports, church picnics, concerts in the park, block parties, family reunions, are all fun for children, too!

- Sing songs from your growing-up years.
- Play games that might be traditional in your part of the country, or to your families.
- Pass on the lore and language of children -- skipping ropes, rhymes, clapping songs, jacks, chants.
- Bring ethnic foods, especially if they may be new to your child!



TO THE HEAD START
VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

The second half of this booklet is written as a guide to help you and your Volunteer Grandparents conceptualize involvement opportunities, design training models, and develop techniques that will be successful.



VOLUNTEER GRANDPARENT TRAINING



EFFECTIVE VOLUNTEERS MUST BE TRAINED!

TRAINED FOR WHAT JOBS?

Any training effort is naturally determined by the program's objectives, the needs of the participants, and the resources available in your local program.

The Head Start Coordinator and the senior volunteer should initially discuss the form the Volunteer Grandparenting might take. The responsibility rests with the Head Start staff to list involvement opportunities before any interviews take place. An informal parent survey of interest in the Grandparent program should be done, if no such information is available from past needs assessments.



Two basic models for Volunteer Grandparent involvement exist for working directly with children. The senior volunteer may become a classroom teacher aide, a home visitor, or an individual learning facilitator as an adjunct to the Education Component. A second model is based on the federal Foster Grandparent Program, wherein the senior volunteer takes the child into his or her home a half-day per week to engage in cooking activities, family interactions, or community outings such as picnics or festivals.

A registration form should be filled out by the volunteer at the interview in which request for placement is made.

WHAT TRAINING MODEL WORKS BEST?

The approach to training which has been used for many years successfully with Head Start teachers, integrates theoretical and field-based learning opportunities. Although the senior volunteer may find it difficult to attend an all day workshop, a short 2-hour discussion group would be ideal.

The first Discussion Group should focus on basic child developmental principles and should occur during a pre-service period so the Volunteer Grandparent is best able to understand the goals of your Head Start before beginning work with children.

A second pre-service Discussion Group

should include parents and focus on cultural or generational child-rearing practices and expectations so that the Volunteer Grandparent will better understand the behaviors of the children in the context of their families.

A second phase of the training begins with Classroom Observation to help the Volunteer Grandparent become familiar with the Head Start program and its many children. Volunteer Grandparents may also be invited to accompany the staff on Home Visits to observe learning opportunities in the home setting.

On a regular monthly basis, hands-on Curriculum Workshops should be offered to the Volunteer Grandparent. These



sessions could easily be integrated into the Education Component's regular in-service calendar and should also include teaching staff to encourage a well-functioning team.

A final component of the on-going Volunteer Grandparent training should be regular Group Supervision meetings. This group meeting time follows a clinical model and is a safe place where the Volunteer Grandparents may discuss problems or concerns, triumphs and joys with each other and with a regular group leader. In addition, a resource person, such as a teacher, the psychological consultant, or the social services coordinator should be invited to attend a part of each week.



This booklet should be distributed to all Volunteer Grandparents for use during their participation. The final section include Resource Guides for their use and adaptation. The Head Start program should work with the Volunteer Grandparents to evolve their own set of materials.

TO THE TRAINING COORDINATOR

The following Curriculum Workshop series consists of 3 sequential learning experiences designed for the new Volunteer Grandparent in order to help them become in touch with what it is like to play with a young child and his or her toys. The activities are recommended highly for any personnel who work with preschool-aged children.

The role of the trainer in these sessions is similar to the role of the classroom teacher -- to prepare the classroom learning environment and to facilitate the adults' progress through the learning episodes.

An important aspect of the workshop model is to allow sufficient time at the end of each session for processing of the adults' reactions to playing and interpretations of these experiences in terms of children's learnings.



COOKING WITH CHILDREN

Objectives:

1. State experiences in food preparation which would be appropriate for preschoolers.
2. List concepts in math, science, social studies, language arts, and aesthetics provided by experiences in food preparation.
3. Identify steps in problem-solving that children may experience as they are preparing food.
4. Describe the role of the teacher in planning, preparing and implementing an experience in cooking.

Activities:

1. Construct recipe cards from a written recipe using graphic symbols, cut-out magazine pictures of ingredients, and few words.
2. Trade recipe cards with each other and measure out the ingredients for the recipe you were given. (Note: recipes and ingredients must be predetermined by the trainer.)
3. Complete the recipe's steps for the ingredients you measured.

4. Everyone taste each others completed food.

Resources:

Harms, Thelma. Learning from Cooking Experiences -- Teacher's Guide to Accompany COOK AND LEARN. Menlo Park: Addison-Wesley, 1981.

NAEYC. More Than Graham Crackers. Washington: 1981.

Rudolph, Marguerita. From Hand to Head, Chapter 5: Breaking Bread -- The Customs and Pleasures of Eating and Chapter 6: Cooking -- Sensory Involvement. N.Y.: McGraw Hill, 1973.



CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Objectives:

1. List a set of criteria for telling or reading a story to young children.
2. Describe teacher behavior that can contribute to children's appreciation of good literature.
3. State how to make arrangement appropriate for storytelling or the reading of stories.
4. Practice reading in front of others.

Activities:

1. Choose a narrative picture from a magazine and tell a story about it to the rest of the group.
2. Select a flannelboard story and make up your own narration to go with the characters. Tell it to others. Use sound effects.
3. Make a story book with magazine pictures. Write the story below the pictures.
4. Record a story from your childhood on tape.



Resources:

Hildebrand, Verna. Introduction to
Early Childhood Education.
Chapter 10: Children's Literature.
N.Y.: Macmillan, 1971.

Stern, Virginia. The Story Reader
as Teacher in Ideas That Work With
Young Children, (Ed.), K.R. Baker.
Washington: NAEYC, 1972.

PRETEND PLAY

Objectives:

1. Describe the value of pretend play in the social and emotional development of young children.
2. List roles of children and adults which might be clarified through engaging in pretend play.
3. State how pretend play contributes to intellectual development in each of the following curriculum areas: math, science, social studies, and language arts.
4. Identify roles of the teacher in supervising pretend play.

Activities:

1. Dress-up in the old clothes provided and identify your character.
2. Act out a story from literature with someone else in the group.
3. Build something with blocks. Use trains, cars and other props to create a town scene. Tell a story about it.
4. Play with a doll house or with paper dolls. Make up a pretend situation and share it with someone else.



A NOTE
TO THE HEAD START DIRECTOR

Since senior citizens are often living on fixed incomes, your local program will need to set a policy on how you will reimburse volunteers for the costs of transportation, admission fees to events attended with children, meals at their homes, or supplies for direct learning experiences, including cooking.

Also, before any day or overnight visitations begin to the grandparental residence, program liability or insurance regulations should be checked. Senior citizens should also be advised of their full legal rights and responsibilities.

While the Volunteer Grandparent has custody of a child, parental permissions and emergency releases on the child are necessary, as they would be on any Head Start field trip.

Additional information on the federally-funded Retired Senior Volunteer Program and the Foster Grandparent Program may be requested from Region VI ACTION office, 212 North St. Paul Street, Room 1600, Dallas, Texas 75201.

Resources:

Film (16mm). Dramatic Play: An Integrative Process. N.Y.: Campus Films, 1972.

Cuffaro, Harriet. Dramatic Play -- The Experience of Block Building in E.S. Hirsch, (Ed.), The Block Book. Washington: NAEYC, 1974.